

REMARKS

The present application was filed on June 15, 2000 with claims 1-80. Claims 45-48, 55, 60, 61, 70-72, 74, 76 and 78-80 were canceled in prior responses. Claims 56-59, 62-64, 73, 75 and 77 were amended in prior responses. Claims 1-36, 41-44, 50, 52, 53, 56-59, 62-69, 73 and 77 remain pending. Claims 1, 24, 41, 50, 52, 53, 56, 58, 62, 65, 73 and 77 are independent claims.

In the Office Action, claims 37-40, 49, 51 and 54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,658,002 (hereinafter "Ross"). In addition, claim 75 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,118,760 in view of Ross.

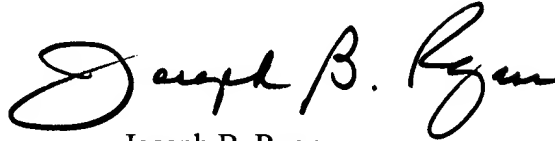
Claims 1-36, 41-44, 56-59, 62-69, 73 and 77 are allowed. Claims 50, 52, 53 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In this response, Applicants traverse the §103(a) rejections of claims 37-40, 49, 51, 54 and 75. Applicants note that the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, Eighth Edition, August 2001, §2142 states that, for an obviousness rejection, "there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings." Applicants respectfully suggest that these requirements have not been met with respect to claims 37-40, 49, 51, 54 and 75. The basis for this traversal is described in more detail in the response (dated May 3, 2005) to the second, non-final Office Action, and is incorporated herein by reference.

Nevertheless, in this response, Applicants chose to cancel claims 37-40, 49, 51, 54 and 75 without prejudice to expedite prosecution. Claims 50, 52 and 53 are also rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims.

In view of the above, Applicants believe that claims 1-36, 41-44, 50, 52, 53, 56-59, 62-69, 73 and 77, as amended, are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph B. Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

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